

Listing of Claims:

1 1. (Currently Amended) A filter element, comprising:
2 a ring of filtration media circumscribing a central axis and defining an internal
3 cavity, an end cap sealingly bonded to each end of the media ring, with one of
4 the end caps having an annular body defining a central aperture, and a groove
5 formed circumferentially around an inner wall surface of the aperture, said groove
6 having a substantially rectangular configuration in cross-section, with parallel
7 sidewalls and an end wall perpendicular to the sidewalls, and is thinner between
8 the sidewalls than it is deep between the inner wall surface and the end wall, and
9 opening radially inward toward the central axis of the element, wherein a central,
10 perforated support core can be received internally of the element and retained
11 therein by a retaining device received in the groove.

1 2. (Original) The filter element as in claim 1, wherein an annular flange
2 inwardly bounds the opening of the body, and projects from an end connected to
3 the body a short distance axially within the cavity toward the other end cap to a
4 distal end located closer to the one end cap than the other, the groove formed in
5 the flange toward the connected end of the flange.

1 3. (Original) The filter element as in claim 2, wherein the annular flange and
2 annular body are formed unitary, in one piece.

1 4. (Original) The filter element as in claim 1, wherein all components of the
2 filter element are formed from incineratable material.

5. (Canceled)

1 6. (Currently Amended) The filter element as in claim [[5]] 1, wherein the
2 width of the groove is less than the thickness of the one end cap.

1 7. (Currently Amended) A filter subassembly, including a ring of filtration
2 media circumscribing a central axis and defining an internal cavity, an end cap
3 sealingly bonded to each end of the media ring, with one of the end caps having
4 an annular body defining a central aperture; and a rigid retaining ring
5 [removeably] removably attached to the one end cap and projecting radially
6 inward into the internal cavity.

1 8. (Original) The filter subassembly as in claim 7, wherein a groove is formed
2 circumferentially around an inner wall surface of the aperture in the one end cap,
3 and opens radially inward toward the central axis of the element, and the
4 retaining ring is received in the groove.

1 9. (Original) The filter subassembly as in claim 8, wherein the one end cap
2 includes an annular flange inwardly bounding the annulus of the one end cap,
3 and projecting from an end connected to the body a short distance axially within
4 the cavity toward the other end cap to a distal end located closer to the one end
5 cap than the other, the groove formed in the flange toward the connected end of
6 the flange.

1 10. (Original) The filter subassembly as in claim 9, wherein the annular flange
2 and annular body are formed unitary, in one piece.

1 11. (Currently Amended) [The filter subassembly as in claim 7,] A filter
2 subassembly, including a ring of filtration media circumscribing a central axis and

3 defining an internal cavity, an end cap sealingly bonded to each end of the media
4 ring, with one of the end caps having an annular body defining a central aperture;
5 and a retaining ring removably attached to the one end cap and projecting
6 radially inward into the internal cavity, wherein the retaining ring is a C-ring.

1 12. (Original) The filter subassembly as in claim 7, wherein all components of
2 the filter element are formed from incineratable material.

1 13. (Original) The filter subassembly as in claim 7, and further including a
2 central support core located within the central cavity and retained therein by the
3 retaining ring.

1 14. (Original) The filter subassembly as in claim 13, wherein the support core
2 is closely and completely received within the internal cavity of the filter media
3 ring, and is supported at either end by the end caps of the element.

1 15. (Original) The filter subassembly as in claim 14, wherein the retaining ring
2 is located so as to engage and support an axial end of the support core.

1 16. (Original) The filter subassembly as in claim 15, wherein the support core
2 is retained at other axial end by the other end cap.

1 17. (Original) The filter subassembly as in claim 13, wherein all components of
2 the filter element are an incineratable material, and the support core is metal.

1 18. (Currently Amended) A filter assembly including a housing; a filter element
2 located in the housing and having a ring of filtration media circumscribing a

3 central axis and defining an internal cavity; a support core [removeably]
4 removably disposed within the internal cavity of the filtration media; and a rigid
5 retaining device [removeably] removably attached to the element and retaining
6 the support core within the internal cavity, the retaining device being removable
7 from the element to allow removal of the support core from the element.

1 19. (Original) The filter assembly as in claim 18, wherein an end cap is
2 sealingly bonded to each end of the media ring, with one of the end caps having
3 an annular body defining a central aperture sized so as to allow the support core
4 to be inserted into and removed from the internal cavity of the element, and the
5 retaining device is removably attached to the one end cap and projects radially
6 inward into the internal cavity.

1 20. (Original) The filter assembly as in claim 19, wherein a groove is formed
2 circumferentially around an inner wall surface of the aperture in the one end cap,
3 and opens radially inward toward the central axis of the element, and the
4 retaining device is received in the groove.

1 21. (Original) The filter assembly as in claim 20, wherein the one end cap
2 includes an annular flange inwardly bounding the annulus of the one end cap,
3 and projecting from an end connected to the body a short distance axially within
4 the cavity toward the other end cap to a distal end located closer to the one end
5 cap than the other, the groove formed in the flange toward the connected end of
6 the flange.

1 22. (Original) The filter assembly as in claim 21, wherein the annular flange
2 and annular body are formed unitary, in one piece.

1 23. (Currently Amended) [The filter assembly as in claim 19,] A filter
2 assembly including a housing; a filter element located in the housing and having
3 a ring of filtration media circumscribing a central axis and defining an internal
4 cavity; a support core removably disposed within the internal cavity of the
5 filtration media; and a retaining device removably attached to the element and
6 retaining the support core within the internal cavity, the retaining device being
7 removable from the element to allow removal of the support core from the
8 element, wherein the retaining device is a C-ring.

1 24. (Original) The filter assembly as in claim 19, wherein all components of
2 the filter element are an incineratable material, and the support core is metal.

1 25. (Original) The filter assembly as in claim 19, wherein the support core is
2 closely and completely received within the internal cavity of the filter media ring,
3 and is supported at either end by the end caps of the element.

1 26. (Original) The filter assembly as in claim 25, wherein the retaining device
2 is located so as to engage and support an axial end of the support core.

1 27. (Original) The filter assembly as in claim 26, wherein the support core is
2 retained at another axial end by the other end cap.

1 28. (Original) The filter assembly as in claim 18, wherein the retaining device
2 comprises means for retaining the support core in the filter element, and allowing
3 removal thereof.

1 29. (Original) The filter assembly as in claim 18, wherein the housing includes
2 an annular base, with a flow passage therein, supporting an end of the filter
3 element.

1 30. (New) The filter subassembly as in claim 8, wherein the groove has a
2 substantially rectangular configuration in cross-section, with parallel sidewalls
3 and a perpendicular end wall, and is thinner between the sidewalls than it is deep
4 between the wall surface and the end wall.

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1 31. (New) The filter subassembly as in claim 7, wherein the retaining ring has
2 a thin, flat, annular configuration and is deformable in the radial direction.

1 32. (New) The filter assembly as in claim 20, wherein the groove has a
2 substantially rectangular configuration in cross-section, with parallel sidewalls
3 and a perpendicular end wall, and is thinner between the sidewalls than it is deep
4 between the wall surface and the end wall.

1 33. (New) The filter assembly as in claim 18, wherein the retaining device has
2 a thin, flat, annular configuration and is deformable in the radial direction.